Metro Social Services Board of Commissioners
Meeting Summary
of
January 25, 2012

Board Members Present: Frank Boehm, Mary Rolando, Bill Sinclair, George Price and Marlen Santana Perez and Renard François

Board Members Absent: Kristine LaLonde

Metro Legal Advisor: Corey Harkey

Mayor Liaison: Hershell Warren

Commissioner Boehm called the meeting to order by welcoming everyone to the Metro Social Services (MSS) Board of Commissioners Meeting.

Commissioner Boehm made a motion to approve the December meeting summary. Motion was properly made, seconded and accepted unanimously.

Old Business

Community Needs Evaluation – Next Steps

Renee Pratt began her report by stating how important it is for the Commissioners to determine how the Community Needs Evaluation will be used.

MSS has used the Community Needs Evaluation to assist with determining how the food boxes can be better administered to the communities. The Community Needs Evaluation identified Tennessee as being fourth highest in food insecurity. The Community Needs Evaluation can be used to help the MSS Homemakers remain competitive and meet identified needs. The Community Needs Evaluation described the new program available through TennCare and Medicaid that allowed homemakers to administer services in the home, which is provided by MSS and other providers.

The Tennessean ran an article in January that talked about additional dollars that could possibly be available for TennCare and Medicare around Home and Community based services. Since MSS provides these services, Ms. Pratt will be following up to see if funds would be available to assist with our new customers. The Community Needs Evaluation now includes an "Evidence Based Practice" sections which has not been offered in the past. MSS will use the findings to look at the future of MSS and to help us move forward and to provide administer services.

Dinah Gregory stated that the Community Needs Evaluations provides an array of different kinds of data from various sources. Ms. Gregory further stated that over a three year period, about 4,000 people were surveyed about unmet needs. Ms. Gregory stated some new information in the Community Needs Evaluation including best practice and the maps that show data by Metropolitan Council Districts.

Ms. Gregory went on further to explain that mapping can be used as a way of providing data to council members regarding demographics of their constituents. Commissioner Boehm stated that he would like to use mapping to distribute as much information as possible about each council district. Commissioner Boehm further asked if there was a way we can make sure our council members receive this information. Ms. Pratt stated that she and Dinah could work together to put some information together for the council. Commissioner Boehm suggested the MSS prepare policy recommendations based on the 2011 Community Needs Evaluation, similar to the one prepared last year.

One way MSS communicates our information to council, stakeholder, etc. is by way of releases, email listing, United Way. It was suggested we add the Chamber of Commerce as a communication contact. MSS currently has Judy Tackett, Communications Coordinator, who is familiar with this area. Commissioner Boehm suggested we move forward with a press conference and invite as many people as possible. Commissioner Sinclair suggested we target certain groups that have influence and are decision makers to assist with getting the word out.

Commissioner Boehm stated that we would prepare material for the Metro Council with maps and demographic data, start work on the press conference and Hershell Warren agreed to schedule a meeting with Commissioner Boehm and Mayor. Commissioner Boehm then thanked Ms. Pratt, Ms. Gregory and staff for putting this together.

Social Services Presentations

Pat Wingfield – Homemaker Services

Homemaker's has been provided by MSS since1981 and presently has a staff of 30. The Homemakers provide nutrition services in the morning and homemaker services in the evening. Homemakers currently service a total of 353 customers with 96 on the waiting list. Most homemakers have been with the agency for more than 10 years. To receive Homemaker services one must fall within certain income levels and the aged, disabled, relative caregivers are served. These services assist with helping to keep the elderly in their homes without having to move to a nursing home.

Michelle Rikli – Quality Assurance

Ms. Rikli is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, who has been with MSS since December, 2005. During this time MSS pursued and received accreditation in July, 2007. MSS did not pursue our accreditation last year due to budget reasons. However, MSS continues to maintain the same standards and practice best practice, monitored by Quality Assurance.

Ms. Rikli does quarterly case records reviews, along with reviewing the open and closed files, she make sure MSS is in compliance with Social Workers Ethical Standard. Ms. Rikli conducts site visits with all our vendors to make sure they are meeting the terms of the contract. Data on surveys gathered by staff are submitted to the board-packet each month. Ms. Rikli closed by stating that surveys for the majority were very positive and rated the staff highly.

Giovanni Corley Homeless and Clifton Harris – Homelessness

Ms. Corley and Homeless program address emergency homeless prevention. Ms. Corley stated that the Homeless Services has been in existence for over 6 years and she has been working with the Homeless in Davidson County for 20 years. Ms. Corley has a total of 6 social workers. The Homeless Unit serves Davidson County residents who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. The Homeless unit also offers case management services information/referral and they also locate housing. "Life Skills for Women" is a new program that has started in the Homeless unit. Some trends that the Homeless unit is facing are women and children and people with long work histories along with first time customers.

Clifton Harris, Director of the Metro Homelessness Commission (MHC) deals with chronic Homelessness. The Homelessness Commission is implementing a 10 year plan to end chronic homelessness through best practice solutions. One of the best practice solutions is the Housing First Program where individuals are taken off the street and put directly into housing along with case management to keep them in housing. Mr. Harris stated that they currently serve 34 individuals. Carolyn Cooper, the Housing Coordinator with MHC has assisted Mr. Harris with connecting over 37 different landlords to house homeless when funding is available. Ms. Cooper is also working with the Go Teach Mentor Program where congregations are adopting former homeless individuals and mentoring these individuals.

Commissioner Boehm stated that he will work with Mr. Harris and Commissioner Sinclair will work with Ms. Corley in regards to the Commissioner assignments.

New Business

Budget 2012/2013

Fiscal year 2013 each Metro Department was asked to present a budget with a 2% cut, equivalent to $121,300.00 for MSS. The proposed budget will not impact staff or layoffs. We are looking at a vacant position and for a third year in a row we will not have to lay off staff. Reduction summary is as follows:

Social Worker Associate position	$48,700.00
Meal Preparation Services	29,000.00
Bus Tickets	10,000.00
Homeless Commission Contracts	27,000.00
Management Consultant fees	3,000.00
Advertising	1,200.00
Supplies	2,400.00
Total	121,300.00

Commissioner Sinclair made a motion to approve the budget proposal with a 2% reduction totaling $121,300.00. Motion was properly made, seconded and accepted unanimously.

Commissioner Boehm asked the Commissioners to try and meet with the various Programs in which they have been assigned prior to the February meeting and also be ready to make comments regarding your discussions. Commissioner Boehm stated that it would take all the Commissioners working together to make MSS more visible in the community.

Commissioner Boehm called for the meeting to be adjourned.